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A Worker's Prayer.

Dismiss me not thy service, Lord,
But train me for thy will,
For even I, in fields so broad,
Some duties may fulfill,
And I will ask for no reward,
Except to serve Thee still.
How many serve, how many more
May to the service come;
To tend the vines, the grapes to store,
Thou dost appoint for some,
Thou hast thy young men at the war,
Thy little ones at home.
All works are good, and each is best
As most it pleases Thee;
Each worker pleases when the rest
He serves in charity:
And neither men nor work unblest
Will Thou permit to be.
Our Master all the work hath done
He asks of us to-day;
Sharing his service, every one,
Share, too, His Sonship may.
Lord I would serve and be a Son;
Dismiss me not, I pray. —SEL.

The Primitive Church and Its Customs.

I shall next inquire after the customs of the early church in keeping the several festivals. Some religious writers divide these into two classes: civil and ecclesiastical, while there were some which can be very appropriately called both civil and ecclesiastical.

Before Christianity became a state of religion, or the religion of the Roman Empire, which place of dignity it was brought to by Constantine, civil festivals were not very well defined; but when the power of the civil rulers was combined with the customs of the church in giving respect to times and seasons, a civil feature is associated with nearly all the festivals, which, before, were purely ecclesiastical. Thus the Passover or Easter was an ecclesiastical festival only, in the church, while no civil authority was shown in it, but afterward it was respected, to a degree by some governments that all civil and criminal court proceedings were suspended, as well as all public games, races, and shows.

The same is true regarding Sunday, or the Lord's day. It was observed by the apostolic church, and from that time onward, as an ecclesiastical festival; and when Constantine became a patron of Christianity, he put a civil feature to the festival, by ordering the suspension of pleadings in the courts of law, and rest from labor throughout his empire.

The calends of January were observed by Christians in the time of Tertullian and Chrysostom, as both of these writers condemn the practice, and exhort to its abandonment by the faithful. It was a civil festival, kept in honor of the emperor, or offering sacrifices for the emperor's safety; and as the idolatrous and superstitious believed that if the new moon was spent in mirth and pleasure the whole year would be a season of prosperity. This superstition lingered in the hearts of many of the converts from idolatry, and they felt a hesitancy in abandoning that which they thought would return to them a year of success and happiness.

Other civil festivals were the emperor's birthdays; and it

does seem only proper that Christians should recognize them, if nothing of an evil nature was associated therewith. Festivals were also kept in memory of the foundation of Rome and Constantinople, the two great cities of the divided Roman Empire.

The ecclesiastical festivals always observed and honored by the church, are, the Lord's day and Passover, already mentioned, Saturday or Sabbath, of Christ's Nativity and Epiphany, Pentecost; and in addition to the above, festivals of the Apostles and martyrs were instituted, also, of the dedication of churches, of bishops' ordinations, of annual thanksgivings for favors and blessings bestowed by God, and escapes from dreadful calamities, of the Annunciation of the Purification of the Virgin Mary.

Some of these have no place in true Christianity, but as they were a part of the works that were practiced under the name, about the close of the age of Primitive Christianity, a passing notice of them will not be out of place as a matter of history. (To be Continued.)

Knowledge unused for the good of others is more vain than unused gold.—Ruskin.

Have a purpose in life, and having it, throw into your work such strength of mind and muscle as God has given you.—Carlyle.

His gifts are to the overflowing of the cup, but when the cup would overflow, He deepens its hollow and widens its brim.—Miracles of our Lord.

The anatomy of former mercies puts an argument in the mouth of prayer, a glass to the eye of faith, and a harp in the hand of selfishness.—Lee, 17th Century.

He knew that the mission of man is to help his neighbor. But inasmuch as he was ready to help, he recoiled from meddling. To meddle is to destroy the holy chance.—Paul Faber.

With Him all is simplicity of purpose and meaning and effort and end; namely that we should be as he is, think the same thoughts, mean the same things, possess the same blessedness. He is utterly true and good to us nor shall anything withstand his will.—Unspoken Sermons.

In the deepest night of sorrow God gives us so much to be thankful for that we never need cease our singing. With all our wisdom and foresight, we can take a lesson in gladness from the happy bird that sings all night as if the day was not long enough to tell its joy.—Coleridge.

Here, in my opinion, lies one of the greatest secrets to practical godliness, and the highest attainment in close walking with God—to come daily and wash, and yet to keep as great a value for this discovery of forgiveness, as if it were only once obtained and no more.—Thomas Haliburton, [about 1698.]

The Religious World.

One hundred and two ministers of the Presbyterian Church died last year.

The Episcopalians have decided to build a memorial church at Gettysburg, Pa.

The commission appointed to revise the constitution and discipline of the Reform Church met at Akron, Ohio, recently.

The Port Richmond Methodist Episcopal Church at Philadelphia, Pa., was unroofed in the storm of August 3d.

St. Paul's Church at Wickford, R. I., has been put in as good repair as its age will permit. It was built in 1707.

The Bible mentions 620 places in Palestine west of Jordan, and 430 have been identified, 132 by the staff of the Palestine exploration fund.

A Young Men's Christian Association has recently been started at Madrid, Spain, where the temptations to young men are numerous and powerful, and where there is no Sabbath.

The total receipts of the American Bible Society for July were \$55,962.53. The total issues of the Scriptures from the Bible House during the same month were 56,200 volumes.

The Chinese authorities have agreed to pay \$3,500 as a compensation for the destruction of the mission-premises belonging to the Union Methodist Free churches at Wenchow during the late riots.

The Lutherans of Saxony are bound to preserve the reputation of being benevolent; for the papers show that not less than \$1,600,000 were given for benevolent purposes within the last eighteen months.

The late Mary W. Johnson, of Philadelphia, a member of the Society of Friends, whose will was lately filed, bequeathed \$157,000, in sums ranging from \$500 to 1,000, to about forty religious and charitable institutions.

A few months since a Presbyterian Church was organized in Quincy, Mass., and recently the Rev. D. B. McLeod was installed pastor of it. The installation exercises were held in Faxon Hall which was completely filled.

On the 12th, of this month the fifteenth annual convention of the Catholic Total Abstinence Union of America was held at New Haven. It was attended by about twenty-five hundred members from all parts of the United States.

The Lutheran doctrine is preached in this country in the following languages: German, English, Swedish, Norwegian, Danish, Icelandic, Finnish, Bohemian, French, Siberian (or Serbian), Slovakian (or Hungarian), and the Indian dialects.

The Executive Committee of the Evangelical Alliance has passed resolutions of regret at the death of the Rev. Samuel Irenæus Prime, D. D., who was one of its founders, and for years one of its corresponding secretaries.

The Missionary Review gives the following statistics of foreign mission work by American Evangelical churches; Home, 11,318,276 communicants. Foreign mission income, \$3,830,931.60.

The Central Turkey College, at Anitab, under the care of President Trowbridge, has had a very prosperous year. The number of students received was 142, of whom 127 remained until the close of the year. Of this number 18 have been received on profession of faith into the Church, making the whole number of church members among the students sixty-eight. The medical department treated over 2,000 new patients during the year.

In northern New York the Quaker missionary of the American Sunday school Union finds communities so remote from church centers that Sunday schools are greatly needed, and by many heartily welcomed, especially by mothers longing for the religious instruction and help of their children. At one place in Herkimer county he was told that no effort had been made to have a Sunday school there in twenty years. In one township the superintendent of the only Sunday school officiates as floor manager of the platform dances which are very popular there. In Washington county on Lake George, at a beautiful point of resort in Summer, a new church building has been erected where a Sunday school had been gathered by him last Summer; and another school was organized in a neighborhood where petty strifes had hindered the effort; sixty-four being present.

The Catholic Church has entrenched itself very strongly in British America. It is divided into four provinces and two districts, one of which is under the direct control of the Holy See, the other under the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Oregon. The Catholic population is nearly two millions. The most populous diocese is Montreal, which has 412,000 Catholics, followed by Quebec with 296,666. Next in order comes Three Rivers, then St. Hyacinthe, and Ottawa. The total number of priests is 2,052; of bishops 24; and of archbishops 5. The total number of churches is 1,556, besides 367 chapels and missions that are scattered throughout the less thickly-settled parts of the country. There are 130 establishments devoted to higher education, while rudimentary education is represented by 3,511 parochial schools. The bulk of the Catholic population is in Lower Canada, and the great majority of the Quebec Catholics are of French descent. In the province of Halifax there are about 110,000 French-speaking Catholics out of a total Catholic population of 278,000; in that of Toronto there are about 75,000 out of a total population of 265,000.

Life should be a constant vision of God's presence.—A. MacLaren.

The Great Mission of the Christian Church.

Jesus is the leader of the Christian hosts. He testifies concerning himself: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." "As he hath done, so must we do." His example is our pattern. The Gospel belongs to the world. The tidings it brings are too great and precious to be hemmed in by the boundaries of any land. The danger to immortal souls is too imminent to admit of a moment's delay. The vows and obligations upon Christians are solemn and require activity. The great commission of the risen redeemer to them is to seek and to save that which is lost. We are to bring the nations to the foot of the cross. Whatever cherished notions must be surrendered, whatever inconveniences it may involve, whatever sacrifices it may entail, the Lord and Savior of men desires, wills and demands that his followers strain every nerve, do all in their power to carry the Gospel to every human being that breathes. The apostles were obedient unto the heavenly voice, braved all dangers, not even counting their lives dear, forsook possessions and friends, kindred and wives and children, traversed deserts and mountains, crossed countries and seas to fulfill their God-given mission. There were but twelve of them against a world which had crucified their Lord, a world which as such had always been hostile to the Gospel, a world which maltreated and was ready to murder them, but, deterred by none of these things, they went forward in obedience to the Lord to do their part in carrying out the saving purpose of God. Had they looked upon the prospect with the eyes of unsanctified humanity; had they considered the work to be accomplished and their sufficiency from the stand point of a weak faith; had they weighed the matter in the balance of human reason, we might still be Christless idolaters and graceless savages. They walked as seeing Him that is invisible. Unterrified by perils and unmoved by hinderances in the way, they went on. The woes of humanity appealed to them for help and the command of their Master urged them on, and forgetting themselves, their dangers and their sufferings, they pressed forward to lift mankind out of their gloomy darkness into the glad sunshine of God's love. Inspired by faith in the Son of God, they were faith-inspiring. Moved by the Holy Spirit, they moved men to believe. With the faith that removes mountains, they removed from the fetters of sin and brought them into the glorious liberty of the children of God. Grandly and nobly did they labor, an example to the church throughout the world, even unto the end of time. Oh, for such faith, such heroism in the cause of Christ!—The Watchman.